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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - Iran China Israel Suicide  
Bomb Attack  
PARIS - Tuesday, April 18, 2006

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

Iran  
China  
Israel Suicide Bomb Attack

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

Yesterday's suicide bomb attack in Tel Aviv and Iran's growing nuclear threat are today's major international stories, while the growing oil crisis is a lead story in today's economic and electronic press, as well as the front page story in Le Parisien.

Hu Jintao's visit to Washington is front-paged in Le Monde, which analyzes what President Bush expects from China, especially on the Iran nuclear issue. Le Figaro interviews Taiwan's President Chen Sui-bian who says: "China has not given up on using force against Taiwan." (See Part C)

Liberation devotes its lead to "Iran's Enriched Threat" noting that "the verbal escalation continues between Tehran and Washington, which has not given up on a military option." The editorial is entitled "A narrow Path." (See Part C) A separate analysis in Liberation by Jean-Dominique Merchet asks "What if Washington Attacked?" and quotes a Pentagon official who supposedly said: "The White House believes that the only way to deal with the problem is to change Iran's power structure, and that means a war." But the article notes that the quote, reported by Seymour Hersh of the New Yorker, was denied by the White House. Laurent Mauriac in yet another article reports that although Washington is working with the UNSC to resolve the Iranian crisis, other means are being explored: Richard Lugar is mentioned as having called for direct negotiations with Tehran.

The suicide attack in Tel Aviv for which Islamic Jihad has claimed responsibility is the lead story in Le Figaro, which calls the attack 'carnage,' noting that the attack was perpetrated during the Jewish Passover holiday. A separate report is entitled "Anarchy Takes Over in Gaza" (See Part C)

Le Figaro and the electronic media report that Moussaoui's defense will try to prove he suffers from schizophrenia "in order to save him from the death penalty," but a decision which goes "against the defendant himself."

La Croix's Gilles Biassette drafts a portrait of "John Batiste, a General at War Against Rumsfeld" and reports on what he calls "a rebellion of the Generals." Biassette also notes "President Bush's total support for Rumsfeld."

La Croix reports that the U.S. "which is very active in Sudan, wants to avoid a new regional crisis and is weighing heavily on President Idriss Deby, who after Washington's request, gave up expelling the 20 000 Sudanese refugees living on the Chad border. The U.S. involvement has, for the moment, proven a success."

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

Iran

"A Narrow Path"

Pierre Haski in left-of-center Liberation (04/18): "Who today could keep Iran from becoming a nuclear power? Apparently, no one. This at least is the answer given by the Iranians themselves, whose escalation leaves no doubt as to their intentions. To reach their goal, the Iranians have the technology, the financial means, the political will and mostly an obvious feeling of impunity. Iran does not believe in a military threat from the U.S., mired as it is in Iraq., has nothing to fear from sanctions by the international community, because of China's benevolence, and is counting on the world's oil needs. This triple equation gives the Mullahs a feeling of power. In a world where the Americans have accepted Israel's

nuclear armament, have recently signed an agreement with India and have shown their inability to bring North Korea to reason, the Iranian Mullahs do not see how they could be stopped. This is why those who in Washington are raising their voices in favor of a dialogue with Tehran are not necessarily the less credible of the lot. And while dialogue offers a narrow way, alternative options remain meager."

#### China

"Between China and the U.S., Explanations at a Summit"  
Corine Lesnes in left-of-center Le Monde (04/18): "On the Chinese side, it is a state visit; on the U.S. side, it is more of a working visit. At a time when disenchantment with China is running high in Congress over the Yuan and China's military spending, Washington is not in the mood to give Hu-Jintao the red carpet treatment. The visit will coincide with a visit to Moscow of the UNSC members to discuss the Iranian crisis. Clearly, a positive sign from Beijing on this issue would be most welcome in the eyes of American diplomacy. To this end the U.S. will try to convince Hu-Jintao that a nuclear Iran will represent a factor of destabilization in Asia."

#### "Taiwan: A Major Headache in the Big Game Between Beijing and Washington"

Jean-Jacques Mevel in right-of-center Le Figaro (04/18): "Taiwan continues to poison the already complicated relations between the reigning super-power, the U.S. and the aspiring one, China. Taiwan's fate will be at the center of the talks between President Bush and Hu-Jintao, who is hoping that the U.S. President will be able to tone down President Chen's ambitions of independence. But it is doubtful that President Bush will make the public announcement his Chinese guest is hoping for. Washington's stance in the straight is one of double deterrence: keep Chen Sui-bian from making any overt gestures of independence, while keeping Hu-Jintao and his men from attacking and taking Taiwan by force."

#### Israel Suicide Bomb Attack

"Renewed Carnage in Tel Aviv"  
Marc Henry in right-of-center Le Figaro (04/18): "According to Ehoud Olmert, the moment chosen by the suicide bomber was not a coincidence: during the Passover holidays and on the inaugural session of the newly elected Knesset. The question is how far can Olmert go in order to contain the escalating violence. His margin of maneuver is narrow, considering he has already implemented a number of financial and trade sanctions. in Gaza. He can hardly do more, short of occupying anew part of the Gaza strip that was evacuated last month, an idea put forward by military high officials. But a major unknown remains how Israel plans to deal with Hamas: Israel's Defense Minister Mofaz has warned that not a single Hamas leader, including Ismael Haniyeh, will enjoy the slightest immunity." STAPLETON